

THE
Cruel Watchmen:
A
SERMON
ON
SONG v. 7, 8, 9, 10.

By the late Reverend,
MR. SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

Heb. xi. 4. — By it, he, being dead, yet
speaketh.



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A
S E R M O N
O N

Song 5. *Verses 7, 8, 9, 10.*

Verse 7. The Watchmen that went about the City, found me; they smote me, they wounded me; the Keepers of the Walls took away my Vail from me.

8. I charge you, O Daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my Beloved, that ye tell him that I am sick of Love.

9. What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved, O thou fairest among Women? What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

10. My Beloved is white and ruddy, the Chiefest among Ten thousand.

IN this Text we have Two Things, 1. What befel the Church in seeking of her Lord; the Watchmen gave her Strokes, *v. 6.* 2. What Speech fell out betwixt her and her Fellow-friends; and there is a Dialogue between them. (1.) The Church, not finding Christ himself to her Desire, lays a Charge upon her Companions, to take her Blessing and hearty Commendations to him, while they meet,

meet, v. 4. (2.) They, upon the Occasion of the Vehemency of her Charge, not so spiritually affected as Need were, answer in the 8th Verse, What Welbeloved is this? What Din is this ye make, to charge us so peremptorily about your Christ? Have you a Christ of your own? Whereof is your Christ made, that ye charge us this Way? And, v. 9. The Church's Stomach rising in her, that her Lord should be despised, falleth out in a high Commendation of him, to the End of the Chapter.

Ver. 7. *The Watchmen that went about the City, they found me, they smote me with their Tongue, wounded me, drew Blood of me.*] No Doubt, she asked at the Watchmen, as Chap. 3. v. 3. *Saw ye him whom my Soul loveth?* But they not only refused to tell her, but wounded her Conscience with reproachful Words, and persecuted her Daughters, in the Way of seeking lost Christ. There are Persecutions and Troubles to be looked for in seeking of Christ. I think Christ even like dear O'er-Sea Wares: Men hazard both Life and Goods to Sea for them. *Matth. 13. 44, 45, 46.* He is the Pearl that Men must buy with the Loss of all that they have. The Woman with the bloody Issue, got a Thrust in the Throng, thrusting in through a Multitude to be at him; The two blind Men, crying ilk one of them for a Pair of blind Eyes, got a Rebuke of the Disciples.
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We may know, we will never get Satan's Goodwill to come to Christ, and therefore he professeth to way-lay the Gate for us. 2. Sufferings and Persecutions are a Piece of the Way; 'tis Christ's golden Mine that leads to Christ's House. He suffered himself, before he entered into Glory: Let them then put on Courage who seek Christ, and resolve to take Blows, Cuffs, Strokes and many Wounds in seeking of Christ, and professing of his Name. *If any Man will be my Disciple, let him take up his Cross, and follow me:* We will not get this changed; the Cross is hard, and we delight to sleep sound in a whole Skin, and that we could seek Christ and profess him, and jouk about, and beguile the Cross, and play it asleep; and we think to slip to Heaven some other Way; and therefore Men study the Art of Wylineſs, how to hide their Profession: Nay, that is not straight Dealing and fair Play; ye must through the Field, and fight fairly and honestly, and be marked as one who follows the Lamb.

v. 7. *The Watchmen.*] Church-Governours are sometimes Church-Persecutors: Scribes and Pharisees, and high Priests are always against Christ and his Disciples. *Paul* found the Rulers of the *Jews* always against him and the Gospel, wherever they had Authority. And Christ told his Disciples, *Luke 21. 12. Ye shall be brought before Kings and Rulers for my Name's Sake.*

Sake. The Leaders of the People have been their Persecutors, *Ezek. 34. 4. With Force and Cruelty have ye ruled. v. 18.* They made the People to eat troden-on Grass, and they gave them foul Water to drink.

Quest. But ye will say, Seeing God has laid a great Burden upon Rulers, especially upon Watchmen, why may not we People lay the same Burden upon them, and securely submit our selves unto them ?

Answ. Nay, but we must know that God is the Lord of the Decree of Election and Reprobation ; and, for his own glorious Ends, he giveth some over to corrupt Teachers, and yet we sin in selling our Consciences to their Directions. But for People there are two Extremes ; *First*, Pride giveth too little, and slow Conscience giveth too much to Watchmen : Therefore let the Foot be pleasant that bringeth good Tidings, Rulers and Tutors to Christ's Bairns that are Minors ; for Pride against them starts off them upon God. Sometimes Men stand still without an Halter in their Head, while Rulers lay on a Load of Dirt upon them ; and their best Devotion here resolves in this, God forgive our Teachers, if they mislead us ; for we know no better, if the Watchmen should command and lead our Conscience under a Pair of Stocks. He is but an ill Market-Man who would give much for such Peoples Part of their Inheritance. Men forget that

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that we Watchmen can put a toom Spoon in a Bairn's Mouth, and cry up the Church-Rulers Authority, *The Law, The Law*, as if the Bible were long ago burnt. But know ye not that Watchmen in Christ's Matters, cannot do better? Yea, the Chair and Pulpit must excel; and therefore, if our Light be your Scripture, the Lord pity you. I will not give much for such Peoples Faith; for our Light often sitteth Door-Neighbour to the fat World, and the World poisoneth Light. Go over the Sea to *Rome*, and learn this in the Doctrine of the Law, of the Nature of the Godhead, of two Natures in Christ: for the most Part they find it true, his Truth hath little Trafficking with the World's Fatness: But, because Purgatory is denied to have any just Claim to Truth by any Part of Scripture, it lieth in the World's fat Womb, Gain giveth Milk and Suck unto it; therefore this Chamber in Hell is chiefly maintained, because this is a Ship that bringeth Home much Gold, and a dying Man will twin his Purse to ease his Conscience. Therefore, when the Command of Rulers hath Ease, Honour, and the Fatness of the Earth upon the one Side, and on the other there is nothing but Losses and Sufferings; the Question is, Many think the World's Side is chiefest like. And again, this is too ordinary in Rulers, as also in us, to seek the Truth, as the wanton Child doth his

Book,

Book, wishing that he may not find it, fearing the finding of his Book cost him the losing of his Pastime. Would Men, in the Fear of the Lord, dig for Wisdom; as for Gold, they would find it: But, as if Men foresaw this Light, the more false Peace they take, and as much of Conscience as maketh for them, and no more: And when the Light of Conscience cryeth too fast, they wish it wanted the Tongue, and in their Heart wish, Sorrow to the well-shod Tongue of an enlightned Conscience.

The Keepers of the Wall took away my Vail from me.] They took away the Scarf that covered her Face, or her Vail or Kerchief that covered her Head, which were both her Ornaments, *I/a.* 3. 23. and a Sign of the Subjection of the Wife to her Husband; for, *Ezek.* 23. 26. they took away the Vail from lewd Women, as a Token they were Harlots; whereas a Vail is a Token or Sign of Modesty. It is clear, the Rulers beat the Church from Obedience to her Lord, and called her an Harlot, heretical and schismatical, and covered her with a Vail of their own Traditions in *Solomon's* Days. Rulers have been playing upon and rending the Woman's Vail; and her subjecting her self to Christ her Husband, in obeying and hearing his Voice only: And this is against Decency and Modesty, to pull the poor Woman's

man's Vail off her Head, and to send her out barefaced and bareheaded amongst her Enemies, to be mocked and laughed at. This has come to pass, Rulers as Tutors, in that they owe Obedience and Subjection to *Watchmen*, because they think they get not too much; whereas Christ commends them in commanding only the Share of a sent Servant straitly bound with a written Commission from the Lord: There they make a *Hole* in the *Woman's Vail*, or they pull the Kerchief off her Head, and busk her with a Vail of humane Traditions, a Vail of Fig-Leaves, not a Kerchief of Christ's fine Linen; this is Pride in Men in eminent Places in the Church, and Pride is an evil and troublesom Neighbour beside Christ, it is always going over the Line, as not content with its own Side; and thinking its own Bounds strait and narrow, it will be over the March, in upon Christ's hained Pasture. 'Tis a Curse in the Law to remove our Neighbour's March-stones: Then, what a Judgment must it be to lift Christ's March-stone, and take in a Piece of Christ's Fur? *Watchmen* have a Power and Authority, that cannot be denied; but they are oft like the Man, that, shaving the *Hair* away with the Razour, goeth so near and deep to meet with the Root of the *Hair*, that he cuts both quick *Hide* and *Flesh*: Rulers are cutting the *Hair*, and exercising the Power which God has gi-

ven them ; but they too often cut Christ's quick *Hide*, and come on with their Knife Side-ways on the Woman's Kerchief and Vail, which only should be of his Busking ; for it is his own Kingly Power to govern his Church, and busk her as he pleaseth : When Men take upon them to do it, they cut Christ's quick Flesh ; and therefore our Lord had Cause to say, *Psal. 2. Be wise, be instructed, ye Rulers of the Earth ;* Guide well, tutor well, look to your Tackling. But the Mischiefe is, Honour is so sweet an Apple, that *Balaam* should strain his Vein of Prophecyng, howbeit the String should break, to be at a golden Chair of Honour, and to keep it, and come to his Purpose: And Man's Honour, and unbounded Desire to be at Honour, has often made a wide Hole in the Church's Vail, and such a main Slop in the Confession of Faith, that an Idol, as great as the Church, has come into Christ's House. Men would fain be at this, to clip in Length and Breadth the Woman's Vail, to make it as meet for Policy, as a strait Coat for a Man's Body, while it paineth him, and he stretcheth it while the Seams skail. The Woman's Vail is most seemly, when Rulers suffer it to keep the just Quantity, and Length and Breadth of the Lord's Pattern on the Mount : And it is the Wife's Part to stick by the Vail, and to put on no other Thing; better lose her Tutors, than lose her Husband.

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The Keepers of the Wall took away my Vail from me.] The Church got this ill Turn of the Watchmen, because she held her Lord at the Door, Lam. 1. 8. Jerusalem hath grievously sinned, therefore the Enemy hath stretched out their Hand upon all her pleasant Things, and also upon her Vail. She hath seen that the Enemy hath entred into the Sanctuary, whom the Lord did command that they should not enter into thy Congregation. The Church of God gets cruel Hands to reign over her, and Gods of Wood and Stone to serve Day and Night: And why? Because your Fathers have forsaken me, saith the Lord, and have walked after other Gods, and served them, and worshiped them. We now cry out of our Lord's Absence, and of his Unkindness, and of cruel Watchmen, and we are only to be blamed, we make the Breach ourselves, we cannot lay the blame of a spilt Drink upon God. If we could keep good Quarters with Christ, we would get Pastors according to God's own Heart. People cry out, when under lewd Shepherds; they should rather cry out against themselves, who are wandering Sheep, than against their Shepherds who caused them to err. A repenting Man is more angry at his own ill Heart that consented to Sin, than he is at the Devil who tempted him to Sin. There is often too much out-crying against Rulers, by those who have no happier Way

to steer the Rudder of the Ship, and too little Sorrow for our own Sin, that procureth that Leopards and Lions should watch over our Cities.

I charge you, with an Oath, O ye Daughters of Jerusalem.] The Church with much ado having escaped the Hands of the Watchmen, finding but small and very cold Comfort from them, and no News about her Beloved, then she turneth to her Companions and Fellows, and conferreth with them, charging them to shew her Welbeloved that she is sick of Love for Christ: And this teaches what Duties the Saints owe to one another, Heb. 10. 24, 25. Pr. voke one another to Love and good Works: Not forsaking the Assembling of your selves together, or of the Saints, and among themselves, to speak that which is good to the Use of edifying, that it may minister Grace to the Hearers. Eph. Having your Speech always seasoned with Grace; This God commandeth, Hosea 2. 1. Say to your Brethren, Ammi; and to your Sister, Ruhmah: Plead with your Mother. This Charge is given to every one of the Faithful, to plead with the Apostates in their Time, Mal. 3. 16. Then they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkned and heard, and a Book of Remembrance was written before him. Our Lord thinketh much of the sweet and comfortable Speeches amongst the faithful Ones, that

that he lays to his Ear and hears, and wri-
teth it up in a Book. And *Zech. 8. 21.* And
the Inhabitants of one City shall go into another, say-
ing, Let us go speedily and pray before the Lord,
and seek the Lord of Hosts; I will go also. This
speaks loud, and cries against these that confine
all the Exercise of God's Worship within the
walls of the Church, making all their Wor-
ship Holy-day-worship, using Godliness for
Holy-days, as they do their Sabbath-day's
Clothes. But *Abraham* had Religion within
his House; he taught his Children, and caused
them to keep the Way of the Lord, *Gen. 18. 19.*
And the Lord, *Deut. 6.* bids the Fathers of
Israel, Teach the Words of the Law diligently
unto their Children, sitting down at Night, and
rising up at Morn. And *Philemon* had a Church
in his House. Are not Ministers Christ's
Stewards? And who knoweth but the Bairns
may not be disposed to eat at the set Meals,
and in the publick Assembly? for the Word's
working, and the Spirit's working are not con-
fined always to the Hour of the Sand-glass;
neither is the Spirit tyed to a Pulpit, or to a
Man or Minister's Tongue: Shall we then
think that Christ's House is so narrowly hol-
den, and his Pantry so scant, that he will not
allow a Four-hours-drink upon his Bairns, nor
a Piece between Meals? Shall not hungry
Bairns get more than publick Allowance in
Church-assemblies? Nay, our Lord alloweth
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the Bairns to carry home to their Houses Grapes and Apples of the Tree of Life, and eat at home, and that they sharpen one another at home ; for many Coals make a good Fire, and private Christians will rub one another's Memories, and their cold Hearts ; and often what Ministers cannot do in publick, God's Spirit with private Help will do at home. It is seen when a great Doctor of Physick has given over a sick Man, an old Wife has come after him, and wrought the same Cure, and made the sick Man sound and whole.

This Doctrine would be rightly understood; for it favours not *Anabaptists*, *Separatists*, and *Brownists*. The Church here publicly confers with the *Watchmen* ; for, in the 3d Chap. 3d Verse, she says to them, *Saw ye him whom my Soul loveth ?* What shall we tell him ? *Tell him* (says she) *that I am sick of Love.* This is a broken and fiery Kind of Speech, and passionate, whereby she lays a Charge upon her Companions, that they would, in their Prayers to God, show Christ her Errand, and take her hearty Commendations and Blessings unto Him till they meet ; because for the present she cannot get Himself. In Desertion, any Thing is good Meat to a hungry Soul ; when the Church had Christ, and was near Him, there being a thin Door only betwixt Him and her,

her, she counted little of Him, and would not fyle her Feet to let him in : To a full Soul a Hony-comb is lothsom ; but now, having lost Christ, she is content, and that with great Desire, to get any that will carry her Commendations to him. Hunger for Christ is good Cheer, and a great Feast : Experience may confirm this Doctrine ; sometimes a Kiss of Christ's Mask, when you cannot win to Christ's bare Face, is a fat Dinner. When *David* is at Home, the Worship of God and his Tabernacle is not so sweet, when he may have the best Room in it. But in *Psalms* 84. He would be content with all his Heart of the Swallow's Room even in the Buggers of the House, and there a *Psalms* was sweet Meat : But when he yoked with *Bathsheba*, both the Tabernacle and the *Psalms* died for cold, and were laid up to a full Sea. Compare your Faith and Sense together, and you'll find Sense prouder than Faith : Sense will have nothing, except it find an open Door to go to God ; and Faith will be content to knock, and look through the Key-hole, to see but the Half of Christ's Face, or one of his ruddy Cheeks : The Church's Sense is at this, *Cant.* 1. *Let him kiss me with the Kisses of his Mouth.* That is a Piece of Pride, say some, to rest with nothing as content but God's bare Face ; His Breath and a Kiss is good Cheer to a hungry Soul. *Luke* 7. 37, 38. a poor Woman is content to kiss his Feet.

Set

Set me as a Seal upon thy Heart, says the Church, Cant. 8. 6. Sense here will have nothing but at the Board-head, and the first Mess, and the Hand in the Plate with Christ: But the Woman of *Canaan's* hungry Soul is glad to be under the Table with the Dogs, and gather the Crumbs that fall from the Table. *Thomas's* Sense has no Credit, except he see Christ, and put his Finger into the Print of the Nails, and his Hands in the hole of his Side: The silly hungry Woman with the Bloody Issue will be glad to touch the Hem of his Garment. *Servants Bread* is good Chear to the home-coming forlorn Son: It was another World, when *Servants Bread* was no Delight to him.

This reproves dawdled Lowns, who, when they have full Wallats, and abundance of Christ's Love, and their Arms full of his Love, misregard Christ, and make small reckoning to anger him, because *Wealth gars Wit waver*. Such spilt Bairns in a wealthy World let Wisdom's good Meat cool and soure; and when that World is away, they would be glad of the Lickings of Christ's Trencher. O but humble Hunger, will think much of Half a Smile, and Half a Kiss of Christ! And the Reasons are these,

(1.) Desertion, and Absence of Christ, is a great Scourge to Pride and Security. When we have Christ at Will, and Access, Presence, Entrance, Liberty, ere we are aware, we turn
wanton

wanton and secure, and count little of Christ's sweet Tongue, his lovely Knocks : It is even here, *Beggars dow not bear Wealth* ; Christ's lordly Beggars are spilt and dawted Lowns : Ye must find the Ground of your Stomach. And because ye are too full, and know not well wherefore the Well serves till it go dry, it is the Wisdom of Christ that ye go over some Hungry-grass, and seek after some Half-blunks, that ye counted little of, and eat sweetly the last Year's Leavings, and be glad of Christ's moul'd Bread.

(2.) Humility is never well fed nor fat, till Sense grow traked and lean ; and then, when Sense is lean, and like to starve in Famine, spiritual Humility (so to speak) gets Cheeks, and grows fat under Desertion : Also Hunger makes a wide Mouth ; and then comes *David, How long, O Lord ? I am sick of Love*, or (as the Hebrew Word bears) *weak through Love* ; that is, feeling Wrath and the Curse of the Law, and wanting the Sense of his pardoning Love. I am sick through longing to have Sanctification, and Reconciliation, and Forgiveness, as is expounded, *Isai. 33. 24. The Inhabitant shall not say, I am sick ; the People that dwell therein shall be forgiven their Iniquity*. For so it is in this Song, Chap. 2. *Matth. 9. They that are whole need not the Physician, but they that are sick* ; he meaneth Saviour-sickness for the Physician Christ. And in the 103 Psalm,

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Bless

Bless the Lord, O my Soul, who forgiveth all thine Iniquities, and healeth all thy Sickneses: This is the pained Conscience, saying, I am as much pained as in a *Fever*; the Health, and Constitution, and Frame of the Life of my Soul is troubled, because I want Jesus to take up the Thing that aileth me. We must know that the Church hath not the Bairns Trowan-Sickness, nor the Lown-Evil that ails her; for,

1. There is a Pain and Sorrow in this Sickness, *Psal. 42. 1. My Soul panteth after the living God. Psal. 84. 2. My Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord: My Heart and my Flesh crieth out for the living God.* When the Heart panteth, and the Flesh hath a Tongue to cry, *David* was not well at himself. It is with the Saints longing for Christ, as with some Women with Child, whose Stomach has the greening Ill, and they lust extremely for uncouth Meat; or as when a Woman's Husband has been long over Seas, every Ship she sees makes her both blyth and sad; for *Hope deferred is a breaking of the Bones*: The first Sight of the Ship; half Joy; but with Pain, when all the Passengers land, and her Husband is not there, then her Heart is like to break: Every one that knocks at the Door makes her both blyth and wo; when she sees it is another, she says, *Alas!* it is not my Husband, it is not my Love. In this Saviour-Sickness,

ness, the Soul in the Word and Sacraments waiteth for Christ, when he is not there: O! my Heart is woe, I miss him, and get him not.

2. As in other Sickness, Meat and Drink does a sick Man little Good, and sleep can he not; the Church has no mind of Sleep, his Absence holds her waking; Word, Sacraments, Conferring, Reading, Praying have no Taste, they feed not; the Soul is ill-like, and sick, while himself come with a cold Drink of Fountain-water of the Well that cometh from under the Sanctuary, out from under the Throne of God and of the Lamb, *Rev. 22. 1.* The poor Soul gets never a kindly Cool of this Love-sickness, no while he come himself: In this Sickness there is a Sense of Wrath, a Fire in the Soul, and a Fit of Unbelief; for Hunger is hard of Faith: When Hunger and Faith run together, Hunger is speedieff of Foot, and outruns Faith. Old *Jacob* heareth that his Son *Joseph* liveth; he believed not, for his Heart fainted, *Gen. 45. 26.* Yet he would fain have believed; But Desire made such a wide Mouth, and raxed it self so far, while Faith took the Cramp. It is, as we say, too good News; Alas! I fear it be not true: And Faith, to a sick Man burnt up with God's Wrath, will be blyth that *Christ* is coming; he will let out a Look, with a watery Eye and Earth-hunger, Alas! I fear it be not he; I would so fain have

it true; I dōw not believe; Fear filleth my Heart so, and that Fear is a Pain of the Fever.

Object. But, is it not a dangerous Case to be thus sick?

Answer. As Christ said in another Place, *This Sickness is not unto Death, but for the Glory of God*; so Speaking and Crying are Tokens of Life here: As,

1. This Sickness hath a fair long Tail, it draweth Christ out of Heaven to the Bed-side of the poor Soul that is Christ-sick: Christ comes always to the Cooling of the Fever; nay, all the While he is in the House, howbeit the Person be in a Fever, and knoweth him not, yet he is at the sick Man's Bed-side, preparing him Drugs, and washing Herbs for him: He is looking on his Groans and Sighs, says, Oh, my Beloved! Oh, my Dear Husband, Christ! Howbeit not heard by him. And Christ answereth him behind the Curtains, Oh for my dear Bride the Lamb's Wife!

2. There is here another good Token, a sweet Impatience in this Love-sickness: Every Hour for absent Christ is a Day, and every Day a Year. Oh, says the Soul, Saw ye him? O! he is long a coming! Oh, he goes slowly! O run, Welbeloved! and be like a Roe or

a young Haire upon the Mountains of Separation.

3. This is one Symptom of a Saviour-Fever also, that there is a deadly Sorrow till he come again ; the Harp of Joy is hung up, and laid by, while Christ come again and put it in Tune again, and his Absence is like a Fan to gar it burn the faster.

4. The spiritual particular Mark in this Sick-ness, that proveth it will end well, is a Hunger for Christ, and a speaking Earth-hunger, an Hunger that hath Hands and Feet ; and it is the only chief Token of Life.

But a *Question* may be asked here, in this Sick-ness, that there is here, An Heart-hunger and Fainting for Christ, promised by Christ to be a Mark of these whom God shall fill, *Mar. 5. 6.* Yet the hungry Soul will not accept of this Mark of Hunger, he reasoneth the contrary Way, *That he is none of God's.*

Answer, 1st, Because extreme Hunger would so fain believe, that often out of Desire to have it true that Christ cometh, it misbelieveth, as was said before.

2^{dly}, Hunger is of Kin and Blood to Want, and is of its own Nature a toom and empty Thing ; and thereupon the Man thinketh, he wanteth all.

3^{dly}, God disposeth of it to be so, because Hunger is given to a Man, not to rest upon it, but to seek Meat : But we may learn here to spend

spend our Desires, even to send them out in Love-sickness for Christ. If the Pulses of many of our Souls in this Time were gripped, they would be found, not to be sick of Love for Christ, but sick of Lusts: Some have *Ahab's* Sickness, sick for his Neighbour's Vineyard; Others have *Haman's* Sickness, after he led *Mordecai* through the Street, sick of Court, because his Honour got a Skud: This Age is full of such Sickness, Fevers of this Sort are very rife; every one is sick for the World.

If ye find my Beloved.] What shall we tell him? The Church must find Christ ere she can tell him.

Doct. *It is only a found Christ that we can pray to.*

If we start him not, and snapper not on him where he is, we cannot pray to him. This condemns these, who tell of Christ's News, and they never find him; they pray and speak to Christ, and they never meet with him: These must be dumb Prayers, and so they are, where Men get no Access at all; they but cast Prayers away in the Air: They that pray in any Measure, or without, must come into the King's Chamber of Presence, and win in to the Feet of King Jesus his Chair of State,
by

by whom also we have Access by Faith into this Grace, wherein we stand, Rom. 5. 2

Object. " Oh, I pray often ; and I think, I
" have not found him : Are all these Prayers
" lost and in vain ?

Answer, All find not Christ in a like Measure,
yet little Faith is Faith, an Ounce Weight
of Gold is Gold, as well as a Mountain of
Gold.

2. If ye have found your self in Prayer,
ye may soon find him ; if ye get in Prayer
but the Sense of a Pair of blind Eyes, and a
dead Heart discovered, it is a Degree of find-
ing him.

3. Know, there be Three Degrees of find-
ing Christ. (1.) Sometimes the Lord gives you
but the Beggar's Welcome, and closs Door,
and Liberty to set to your Mouth to the Hole
of Christ's Door, and cry through ; and ye
find him, when ye find but the very Hole of
Christ's Lock. (2.) Sometimes the Half-door
is cast up, howbeit your weak Arms dow not
cast the Door to the Wall ; and this is more
than the First : And here we ly whinging and
scraping at his Door, with some Degree of
Motion and Liberty wrestling with an unbe-
lieving Heart. (3.) Sometimes ye find the
whole Door cast open, and your Bridegroom
taking a hearty Armful of you, which is pos-
sibly a Feast by common ; any of these are a
find-

finding of him: Only beware of fashionable and dead Prayers, coming from Custom, not Conscience. One of the Marks thereof is, As Men that cast in their Bill to Christ, and never ask whether they be heard or not. Well then, ere ye go away, lay on at last a good Knock, and always so pray, that ye instantly urge the Answer of your Letter.

2d *Object*. " Then, when I cannot find Christ, shall I not bide back, and pray none while first I find him ? "

Ans. This is a deep one, that Satan brings, That some will never go to Christ, till they be so well busked, that there is not a wrong Pin on them. It is best to go to Christ with rent and loose Clothes: Necessity cannot blush. Young Children rive two or three Books before they learn one Letter. Better spill a Prayer or two, and fumble at it, as be deluded of Satan to wait while your Hearts be in a good Blood: Nay, a cold Man must stir himself, that he may grow hot. Prayer is like God's File to scour a rusty Heart: Blowing helpeth a cold Fire; and, by moving, stirring, and working upon the new Creature, or new Birth, the Heart will grow warm. To stay from going, till your Heart say, *Go, now I am prepared*, is the Way to lose what you have, but not to find more. Be doing, howbeit weakly; If there were something of yours, and something

thing of his, he will accept his own, and pardon yours.

If ye find my Beloved.] Then Christ is a seeking, and lost in the Church's Feeling; yet notwithstanding, he is her Welbeloved, as v. 12. Christ stands without at the wrong Side, yet he is her Beloved; the Covenant is standing sure. If I were in Hell, and he in Heaven at the Right-hand of the Father, yet he is my Lord and my God.

DOCT. *Want of present Possession of Christ depriveth not the Saints of right and just Claim.*

A Man Year and Day at the Horn, the King's Rebel, loseth the Liferent of his proper Heritage, yet the Heritage is his, and his Heirs; he loseth the Use, but not his Right. A Nobleman having three Houses to dwell in, the King for a Fault confineth him in one of them; his Confinement forfaulteth the Use of the other two, but his Right remaineth: So doth it fare with the Saints; they being Christ's Outlaws for some Offences done, do often lose a very long Liferent of spiritual Joy and Comfort, Presence, Access, Liberty, Feeling, Love-bliss; Christ in his felt Presence, being under a Wadset to them: Yet all this Time the Saint will not deny Christ; nay, he will say, *My Lord, my Saviour, my*
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Welbeloved. Isa. 49. 18. *Zion saith, My God hath forsaken me :* But saith the Lord, Well, *Zion*, think on, of this, that he is thy God, and yet hath forsaken thee ; That he is thy God, and not thy God : Your Tongue maketh you a Liar ; but here, under the Forfaulture the Claim standeth still ; *Jonah* 2. 4. *Then I said, I am cast out of thy Sight : I said ;* which I, said it ? Even dreaming, raving *Jonah* said it ; God said it not ; for *Jonah's* Title, Claim and Right stood still. They are Fools then who hang up all the Right of their Salvation on a rotten felt Presence ; it is a loose and rotten Pin. Money lent out upon a Bond, is a Man's proper Good, howbeit not in his Coffer ; so Christ to the Saints is sometimes as lent out Money. It is fit that ye think the Furnace is making ready for you, and that ye find Christ at the Wall ; yet learn to swim, howbeit a wombful of Feeling be not at Hand to hold up your Head : Dawted Bairns, ye must learn to go your alone, howbeit your mild Nurse JESUS be not at your Back to hold up the Bairns by the Shoulder ; If ye can do this, and keep your Assurance, howbeit Hell and Death were in the Shell of your Heart, yet Christ and Heaven is in the Yolk of it.

What is thy Beloved more than another's Beloved ? The Comparisons of the Church, being carnal, and not well acquainted with

Love-

Love-Sickness as the Church, give her a sharp Check: For the Church spake with Feeling, and took a hearty Mouthful of it, in charging for her Welbeloved; therefore the Companions of the Church double the Question, and they say, Have ye a Welbeloved of a new Cut? Whereof is your Christ, more than another's Christ? There is a fell great Din about your Beloved; ye are fell hot in the Chase. What needeth all this, that ye come on with Adjurements and Charges to bid us speak to *Christ* for you? I would not have you over fine; be like Neighbour and others. Neighbour-like in Holiness is very good.

DOCT. *In as far as we are carnal, we doe not bide hot Forwardness in Religion; we love still a Moderation in God's Matters.*

We need not think but the old World thought *Noah* a great Fool, too hot and too just: He will have a great Vessel on dry Land, far from the Sea; and he will have all the World, save himself and a few more with him, drowned for Sin. *Noah* forsooth in all the World, and none but he, the holy Man. Ye know, *Jeroboam* bringeth in the Golden-Calves, 1 *Kings* 12. 18. *It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt: As if he had said, It cannot be de-*

nied, but it is God's Law to go up to *Jerusalem* to worship ; but, seeing his own Wisdom is in a Strait, it is no Matter in the Case of Necessity, if God be worshipped : I doubt not but the Place where he is to be worshipped is indifferent ; Therefore it is not good to be too forward, and lay too fore a Burden on the People, to pain our selves to take the young Children and the Male-Children thrice a Year up to *Jerusalem* : Therefore *Jeroboam* with a Piece of Discretion would slack the Girth. There is a Thing in Religion now, that they call *A wise Moderation* ; This is only safe (say they) let old politick canny Men go before you, and follow them, and dance ye as they pipe, and that is sure Work. *He is old enough, ask himself*, say the Parents of the Blind-Man : They thought the Rulers burdened their Discretion with a tempting Question, therefore they would not take the Tale ere it came to them. I love Christ, says the Mid-way Man, or the Halfling Man, as well as the best of them ; but I will not be a Fool to make a Blowing-horn of my Religion ; They shall never know what Side I am on : Fy, fy, fy, for Wisdom to this Age ; I am, I hope, as good a Protestant as the best of them ; I hope I have a Soul to keep ; but, ill met I thrive, if I dow bide Persecution, or endure it, if it be great or fore ; and that Men should start at a Straw, and carry so little Stomachs,

machs, as that they will not do as Neighbours and others do. Have ye forgotten what common People say, *Too holy was hanged?* I would not have Mens Consciences so small spun, a Conscience of small Linen or Cambrick, that drow not bide the Fire, for the Threed will soon break: 'Tis good to be holy and wise. It can hardly be thought but such Men, if they do as they say, and speak this Way, and believe as they speak, they think God's Law a too high-tuned Lute, and therefore Moderation must slack the String. When David said, *Psal. 16. 4. The Idols Drink-offering will I not offer, nor take up their Names in my Lips*; such Men would have judged David had too precise Lips, who would not name an Idol. This Mid-way that Christ blamed, they thought they might come to Heaven, and there was no Necessity to be so holy as the Scribes and Pharisees: But Christ said, *Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Nay, Men are gone so far on, that an Atheist hath taken this Course, as not to take a Whore in Time and Place; not to sin, swear, and drink, and follow the ordinary Chambering and Wantonness of the Time, rather than be so precise: So that Lewdness is now Moderation. Nay, I wish Men were perswaded of the contrary, and would know that Christ's Pass to Heaven, is
either,

either; Go quickly and with all Speed to Heaven, or then miss your Lodging at Night; take your Choice, the old Job-trot, the Mid-way Course: Wallaway, Brother! that will not do the Turn. Therefore, no Marvel this World thinketh the Saints have another Welbeloved, nor the rest of the World. It is well known, our Divines think not of Matter, of Faith much more than what Papists say, as learned and as holy ye believe otherways; and we have this daily, Others have a Soul to keep as well as ye: What then? Must not every Man be his own Herd? Here Men think with one Stroke of this Hammer they have bell'd a Man dead and cold to the Ground; and yet all this sail, is no better than a rotten Argument from Example, that is not sure in dry Land, and very dangerous in the Sea. Let the Pilot say to the Passengers, Sirs, a better Man than ever I was or will be, who loved Life, Goods, and the Ship as well as we do all, he sailed upon yon Rock; so that, if I can, I will try my Skill to sail yon Way: Is not that an ill, an unhappy Sea-Logick? and Conscience in God's Matters must then be in Danger: It is better to ask for Truth, when it is to be had; for Truth will not err, but Men may.

What is thy Beloved more than another's?] Now that the Companions of the Church ask this Question, shews that they were not acquainted with

with Christ, neither had Experience of this Fit of spiritual Ague and Fever for absent Christ.

DOCT. *All within the Church have not alike Knowledge; the Lord has Bairns in his House, and Christ's Bairns must creep ere they can gang,*
 1 John 2. 13. Some Fathers, some young Men, some Babes; there may be one three Years of Age, and the other a sucking Child, that cannot speak nor go, nor walk nor stand, as yet.

Use 1. The Aged should bear with the Infirmities of the Younger; and if a weak One should fall and break his Leg, the Apostle to the *Galatians*, 6 Chap. 1. verse, will have these that are spiritual to put the broken Member in Joint again, and tenderly spelk the broken Bones. We are, in thus carrying towards Men, to keep these Rules.

1. The haughty and proud Pharisee is not to be born with in his Obstinacy; No Man owes his Tongue to lick his Neighbour's running Boil.

2. 'Tis Rashness for any Man to break up a Window in any Man's Soul, and flee in upon his Conscience at the first; Let God sit Judge there.

3. In critical Controversies, and sundry Opinions in Matters of Faith, we should go attentively by the thorny Bush, and walk so with

with Men who worship the same God, howbeit in somethings they err from the Truth, as with compassionate Mindedness towards them.

4. We are to look as well to what Men have, as what they want; we look always to the black and dark Side of the Man, and to Mens bloody Parts; Love would say, Turn the Leaf, and cast up the other Page, and look to the enlightened Side of the Moon: We, like the Flie, cannot sit down on the whole Skin, but with small Eyes and Tongue we fall down upon the sore Boil at the first.

5. Let them be wicked; we are then not only to look what they want, but what possibly the Grace of God may give them. A Fish playing in the Sea to Day, for any Thing we know, may be prepared for *Christ's* Table to Morrow.

6. A common Fault among all, that we look to Sick Men with Pity, and envy sinful Men: *Christ* wept for *Jerusalem*, yet *Jerusalem* slew him, *Luke* 19. 41. *Samuel* mourned for *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 15. 35. yet *Saul* sought to kill him, *Chap.* 16. 2. *Samuel* envied him not, howbeit he had taken the Office from him; he had Pity in Place of Grudging. Thankfulness for what we have received from him, would tune our Spirits: And we would even be thankful for what he hath denied us, if we consider the Matter aright.

7. Ye

7. Ye jude not right, Wickedness craveth the largest Share of Envy of Subjects Love and Charity ; thou barkest at him with thy Mouth, and smitest him with thy Tongue, but little knowest thou that he sitteth in the Cleaving of a windy Mountain; Temptations from all Four Airths come upon him; every Day thou art on the Shore, and he in the raging Sea; and this is one of *Solomon's* Evils, the poor Man can ly in his Bed, and play with the Oppressor.

8. All Men have Wants and Helps; but here is the Matter, some have Crookedness, and that is soon seen, because some carry the Blot in their Face, and they are soon spit at. You pity your own crooked Toe, and are offended at your Brother's crooked Nose; ye pity yourselves, and send your Love Home over to lick all your selves: Hold Friends here, and lend Love and Charity to others, and send some of it from Home to love and pity others, and so much the more, because Fire will be under much Ashes; and if the Man be God's Gold, will ye cast him away because he wanteth some Grains, or because his King's Stamp is lipped in the Edge, and he wants half a Letter? *Christ* will pay the Skaith, and take him into his Treasure, whom ye have cast out of your Love and Hearts; only beware of casting a these whom God has taken in; that is to be feared. In a Word, when there are weak and

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strong

strong in a Church, every Man should have a Back and a Saddle in Readiness to bear his Brother through the Water. Our Lord Jesus will not cast away a bruised Reed, nor deny a poor weak Bairn of his own Kin and Blood, because he hath a little Crook or an Halt: Neither should we cast any away, but love, pity, help, wait on, and be thankful for what the Lord hath given us.

That thou so chargest us.] The Adjurations of the Church, sick of Love, are to the natural disposed Daughters of *Jerusalem*, uncouth and strange; What meaneth this Woman (say they) with this double Shot of common Zeal? We have seen many holy Folks before, but we saw never the like of her. But, in as far as we are ignorant of God's true Wisdom, and God's Way of spiritual Soul-Fevers in the Conscience of his own Children, we wonder of their Experience. *Paul beareth this of Festus, Much Learning hath made thee mad, Acts 26. 24. But the Foolishness of God is wiser than Man, 1 Cor. 1. 25.* That which Man calls Foolishness, and stark Dassing in God's Matters, is only Wisdom, above all worldly Wisdom; and they think God's Saints silly Gouks, and God's Bodies climbing Crow-nests, they wot not what they are seeking: Honest Man, (say they) he means well, he is a zealous Body, but he has little Wit, there are Bees in his Head. In as far as
Men

Men are natural, they can put an Affize on Christ, and hold a Justice-Court upon the Power of Godliness, and give out Doom, that Godliness is but plain Fancy: Howbeit Nature had Need to be God's Scholar, yet it will need put a Book in God's Hand, and be his Master, to give him a Lesson. *Ihu*, and one of his Companions, call one of God's Prophets, a mad Fellow, *2 Kings 9. 11.* And what was Jeroboam's natural Estimation of Obedience to God's Law? *1 Kings 12. 26, 27.* And Jeroboam said in his Heart, Now shall the Kingdom return to the House of David: If this People shall go up to Jerusalem, to the House of the Lord, then shall the Heart of this People return again even to the Lord, even to Rehoboam King of Judah, and they shall kill me. Doth not this Head of Wit speak a Fool's Tale? God said, By Obedience to God, his Throne shall be established. He says in plain Language, If I be holy, I shall never do well; If the People worship God, as he hath commanded in his Word, then farewell good Policy, and worldly Wisdom, I and my new Honour shall shoot short. Any Man that has Nature in him, let him resolve how he will take up his Cross, and follow Christ; and when it comes to Obedience with seen Danger, this Wisdom will say, O take Heed what you do, look ere you leap; ye resolve well, but you walk upon Coals covered with Ashes, ye spit

further than ye will leap : And these that obey Christ, because natural Wisdom bids them obey, obey natural Wisdom, and not Christ, in God's Matters. Men had Need to take Heed to their natural Wisdom, else it will lead them into the Briars, when God calls them either to do or suffer : Ye must hear no Vote but one, even Christ's own Words ; for our Wisdom hath a rank Smell of " Go at Leisure, Pity your self, " go at Leisure, take heed, be not too forward, " see to your own standing." Christ says, *Matth.* 11. *Wisdom is justified of her own Children.* Then God's Wisdom is condemned of her own Bastards : They call God's Wisdom rash Folly. The ill Step-bairn will never speak good of its ill Step-mother ; worldly-minded Men are not Wisdom's full-gotten Bairns, and therefore they speak ill of their Mother ; but the full-gotten and lawful Sons of God's Wisdom, speak good of their Mother, and follow her Foot-steps. 'Tis good to obey God, and when the Condition comes to their Door, carnal Wisdom says, Shall I do it ? This Wisdom is the Devil's Wisdom, and thinks to lord it out against Christ bravely ; but it danceth always at the fat World's Pipes, and thinks it Folly and ill Manners, to be out of Tune, and fall out with the Multitude, and come to Danger, as Christ did with the Scribes and Pharisees, and Court and Time, and the Doctrine of the Elders. Oh ! Learn to deny your selves,

and

and be in Tune, and to keep in Measure with Christ Jesus, a good Conscience on a Death-bed : He is wise enough, who is wise to Salvation, and has saved his own Soul ; and Christ says, *Well done, good and faithful Servant*. What is well done, must be wisely done : Goodness cannot be a Fool.

My Welbeloved is White and Ruddy.] The Church with an Edge of Words, taketh Christ's Part : My Beloved, my Beloved ; I would ye wist what ye said, when ye speak of my Beloved ; I scorn he be made Fellow with any in Heaven or in Earth.

One Thing is here worthy in the Church, That hearing Christ laid in an uneven Ballance, she starteth quickly, and taketh the Temptation by the Nose ; and in a long Speech setteth Christ even up to the Skies, and dingeth speedily all the Companions with Force of Words out of any Opinion that Christ hath any Match. This is right, not to let the Temptation go on : We should not let Men away with it, when they go to put a wrong Construction on Christ Jesus ; nay, true Grace will borrow Grace from a Temptation ; As *Paul*, seeing Idolatry at *Athens*, and God put out of his Room, he grows hotter nor he was before, like a Horse that dow not endure the Spurs ; so, when Christ saith, *John 6.* to his Disciples, upon Occasion that *Capernaum* had played the Turn-coat

coat, and left him, *And will ye also leave me?* Peter answered, Leave thee! Whither then? To the Devil. The Disciples, *Acts 9.* were commanded to speak no more in Christ's Name. Peter and John draw out a strong one against that: They will not leave it so, *Whither is he right to obey God or Man, judge ye.* This speaks hard against such as would hear Christ ill spoken of, and let a Reproach ly upon him that died for them, and blow it over their Shoulders, and misken when they hear a good Friend ill spoken of; nay, they cannot be fiery enough when they get a Taunt. When the black-mouthed Dogs of the World bark against that meek Stranger Christ, there should then be a Staff in your Hand: Now the Curse of God upon them that loves not my Welbeloved. Ye hold with your own, ilk one takes Part with their own; a Man will speak for his own Country, or for his own Father, Brother, Bairn, Wife or Friend; he will plead for them, but never a Word for, or in Favours of his own Christ: He will do his own Errands, and speak his Business to his Prince, but not a Word for Christ; Christ has Tongue enough, let him speak for himself. Well, well, Nobles of *Scotland*, I will not say, So be ye served when your Eye-strings break, and your Life comes to your Lip; but, God forgive you. And what better are these, that will stand at *Christ's Back*, and see his Head broken, in his Cause, and Members

bers, and Church, and not party their Wel-beloved, and never say, 'Tis ill done? True Zeal will make a Quarrel of a Wrong done to *Christ*, and he gets too many Wrongs now done him: He is like the Man that hath many Kin, but few Friends: Many are with *Christ*, but few for *Christ*: He is worn out of Friendship with this World.

White and ruddy.] White and ruddy is the best Temper, and strongest and liveliest Constitution, and is pointed out to note his Godhead, white, pure, innocent and holy; as, *Dan.* 7. 9. He appeared in the Vision, white as Snow and pure Wool, and his Raiment as white as Lightning. *Matth.* 17. 2. In him dwells all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily. *Col.* 2. 9. *1 Cor.* 14. 4. Flesh and Blood with us. This sheweth that *Christ* is beautiful among the Sons of Men, *Isa.* 48. 2. and delights as much as perfect Red and perfect White will make a beautiful Person, and will take a Castle in the Heart. We love fair Things well, as fair Sun and Moon, fair Roses and Lilies, Men and Women, fair Clothes; but put all the Beauty of the Creature in one, they are but Chaff and Sand to fair-faced Jesus. I would rather have one Look of Jesus, than a thousand Worlds, and sevenfold more Beauty than them all. *Isa.* 63. 1. *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed Garments from Bozrah? This is he that*

that is glorious in his Apparel, travelling in the Greatn's of his Strength? The Church wondering at Christ's Beauty, to see him gang so wane-like, says, Who is yon that goes so sonfy-like? He is a Luckie-like Person, it would rejoyce an Heart to see him gang in the Greatness of his Strength: Is not yon fair glorious Jesus in red Scarlet, having all his Garments dyed in Blood? The Answer is made, *It is I, even I that speak in Righteousness, mighty to save.* John 1. 14. *He dwelt among us, and we beheld his Glory, as the only begotten Son of God, full of Grace and Glory.* He looketh like himself; he looked (said John) when I saw him, even like the Thing he was, even like the King's eldest Son, even like the Heir of a great King. Read at Leisure; his Beauty is answerable to all that is said here, Col. 1. 16, 17, 18, 19. Rev. 4. 13. Rev. 10. 1. Rev. 19. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. If any fair Thing win your Heart, and lovely Jesus wins it not, ye must be very lordly and ill to please if he do not. Now ye may make good Use of all this Doctrine, if ye take him with all his Fairness, as your Husband whom you love, as your Master whom you serve, as your King and Lord whom you obey, as your Shepherd & Guide whom you follow. And for all his Beauty, he is not proud nor lordly: He will match with black Ones. Surely Christ's Beauty helps to marry him; he is always White and Ruddy, and most when he

he wooes. I marvel not that he seem black and dim to some Men, who got but a Sight of Christ's Face in the Devil's Glass ; for there be three Sights or Representations of Christ, and in them all he is black, for he comes on Mens wrong Side with his Beauty.

1. Natural Men, without Faith, have only natural Eyes to see him with ; and they see but *Mary's Son*, and not Christ White and Ruddy ; they see not the King in his Beauty, nor Christ in his Holy-day Clothes.

2. Some see him in the Law of his Commandments, commanding hard Things to Flesh and Blood, to deny themselves, to enter in at the Strait-gate and Narrow-way. Men would love Christ's Beauty, if he only shined with Light and Love ; but his Light commandeth, accuseth, challengeth, and condemneth ; and this makes Christ both gray and black-skinned. Men should love Light as well, because it commandeth and convinceth, as because it shines as Light ; and should break the Devil's false Glass, and learn out of Love to obey : And then Christ's

Yoke would be easy ; and they should say, O Fair Jesus, White and Ruddy Jesus.

3. Men look to his Cross, and this is Christ's black Skin, and black dool Clothes, *Isai. 52. 14. As many as were astonied at his Visage so marred more than any Man, and his Form more than the Sons of Men.* Then, to many, he cannot be White and Ruddy. If he have under Sufferings a marred and pale Visage, black and blae, and all blackened with Straiks : These that cannot rejoyce in Christ, cannot count it all Joy when they fall into diverse Temptations ; such see but Christ's Outer-half, and start aback at his marred Visage : But Faith here shall look to Christ within ; he is well lined within, even under Sufferings.

The Banner-Bearer among Ten thousand.] In the *Hebrew*, the Banner or Standard is a Warlike Sign, he that bears it is the Chiefest that follows him ; so *Judah* was the chiefest Standart-Bearer, and out of his Tribe Jesus sprang, or, *He is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Rev. 5. 8.*
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He stands for an Ensign of the People, Isa. 11. 6. The Armies of Thousands follow him in Heaven, Rev. 19. 11. He ruleth the Gentiles. Put White and Red together which betokens Health and Strength, which shew that he is the Standard-Bearer; then we see that Christ is a strong tried Soldier, and the prettiest Man; in his Hand is all the Campaign: Bring Ten thousand Thousands, and that is many, yea, put all these with the Armies of Heaven and Earth together, and he is the prettiest Man, and the bravest Man among them all; yea, put them altogether, and one Look of his Face is worth them all. So, to speak of his Vertues, this is among the First of them, That he is a tried Man of War; for, who but he fought the Lord's Battles, and fought it out with the Curse of the Law, with Sin, with the Devil, Death and Hell, and goeth with many Crowns on his Head together, conquering, and he alone has laid many a pretty Soldier upon the Breadth of his Back? But that Description holds, that Christ will have a-do with his Strength; nay, while the Devil be in Hell, nay, while the Devil

be bound, and cast into the Lake which burns with Fire and Brimstone, and be locked up, Christ will have but the Fighter's Life of it: Christ and all his Armies of Ten thousand at his Back, all his Bairns (God bless the Company) must fight it. It would even do a Man Good, and rejoyce his Heart, to see Jesus fight, it lets him so well to fence and wald his Sword. O say, Christ at the Best has but the Soldier's fighting Life, therefore all ye that come unto him, take or leave on these Terms; ye must on these Terms either do or die; either fight with your Standard-Bearer, or ly down and be slain:

Object. " O say ye, Suffering is a hard
" Lot; will Christ and his Church ne-
" ver get Rest? "

Ans/w. Certainly little or none while they be at home together. It was never otherwise with Christ; he was ay oftner in the Camp watching and praying, than in a Bed sleeping; therefore, all ye that come to him, must come upon these Terms. Rise up off the Hearth-stone, and from the Fire-side, put on your Shoes and all your Armour, and march to the Camp
with

with him : Blood, Blood ! The Cross of Christ, the Cross of Christ for you to your dying Day, while ye be in Heaven. It is proclaimed at our King's Market-cross, in Jesus's Name, Red War, red War betwixt you and three, the Devil, the World, and Sin; but Christ beareth the Colours, he is well worthy of that Place, he ventures foremost with White and Red, God and the Church's Colours. Silly, tempted, crossed, wounded Soldiers, look up to your Standard-bearer, to Ensign Jesus, now Red and White ; take Courage, and buy a Heart from Christ.

Object. " But ye will say, Jesus is oft
" in his Cause and Members put to
" the worke, and his Colours sloped
" through with Cannon Bullets."

Ans/w. Nay, let God sew the Holes of Christ's Standard again: And we may certainly say two Things of Christ ; this Text makes him White and Ruddy, also strong and able: Our Captain is not sickly, he is able to fight, to watch and ward; he is White and Ruddy, and so not lean, weak, feeble, traiked or blackned, and therefore he can watch and ward, and
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not take Sickness ; neither Cannon-bullet nor Arrow will go through this Croflet of Proof: He is God, and not Man, only the Strength of *Israel*; he wearieth not. A Wager, I dare say he will win; and when it cometh to the laſt Onſet, he will make bloody Breeches ; the Ark ſhall be ſent home again, and Glory ſhall dwell in our Land. Chriſt will mow down his Enemies, and looſe the Belt of the Rulers of this Land, and all that are againſt him ; their Belts are knit with a ſingle Knot, and when Chriſt puts in his Hand or Finger in the Loop, both Belt and Sword will fall from them: And how will they then fight ? *Rev. 17. 14. Theſe ſhall make War with the Lamb, and the Lamb ſhall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings ; and theſe that are with him, are called, and faithful, and choſen.* And in End, when Chriſt and we ſhall lay down our Swords at Heaven's Entry, and put on our Crowns of Glory, and our King's Robes, Chriſt ſhall be All in all. To him, his Father, and his Spirit, be Dominion and Glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Courteous and Christian Reader is desired to advert, concerning the foregoing Sermon, That it is probable it has been taken from the Reverend Author's Mouth; and no Man is capable with a Pen so closely to follow a Preacher, but that he may mistake some of his Words, yea even of his Sentences; which may be the Reason of some Inaccuracies in this Sermon as now printed.

Or it is possible it may have been copied from the Author's Notes: And, considering that some Ministers give but Hints of their Subject and Method in their Notes, such as may indeed serve for their own Help when they come to deliver their Sermons in Publick, but which cannot so easily be understood by others who may have Access to these Notes: And, considering also, that it is a long Time since the Author died; and that these Notes, by coming through many Hands before they came into the Hands of him whose Copy is now put to the Press, may have been very sore defaced, and in some Places illegible; This may be another Reason why there are some few Sentences in it, as now printed, that are somewhat dark at first View.

But,

But, Christian Reader, Whatever Esteem others may have of this Sermon, who are more in Love with what tickles the carnal Fancy, than what is suited to the spiritual Understanding; yet you, who are acquaint with the Internals of Religion, cannot but see something in it very obliging to your self, and every one that is inlightned with the Spirit of Jesus. It is therefore hoped, that all of your Denomination will overlook the Roughness of the Stile, and rather dive into the Meaning of the Thing.

That the Reverend Author could write in a better Stile than this, yea in as good a Stile as any of his Contemporaries, none will doubt who have perused his other Writings: And it is as little to be doubted, that tho' to the Learned he was as a learned Man, yet in his Sermons, which were generally delivered to illiterate Country Congregations, he expressed his Mind (or rather his Master's Mind) in such Words, and by such Resemblances, as might best take with their weak Capacities. And in this he followed the Example of the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. 1. 3, 4, 5. who came not (to the Corinthians) with Excellency of Speech, but was with them in Weakness: ----- Nor was his Speech and his Preaching with the enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, but in Demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power: That their Faith should not stand in the Wisdom of Men, but in the Power of God. FAREWELL.

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